

CONNECTICUT MARINE TRADES ASSOCIATION

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March 18, 2013

Planning and Development Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: **Committee Bill No. 459 AN ACT CONCERNING LOCAL CONTROL OVER COASTAL AREAS**

Chairmen Cassano and Rojas, Senator Fasano and Representative Aman and Members;

The Connecticut Marine Trades Association (CMTA) and our membership urge you to give your support to **Committee Bill No. 459 AN ACT CONCERNING LOCAL CONTROL OVER COASTAL AREAS**. This bill would shift authorization from Connecticut's Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to local municipalities to exempt construction of a deck and structural components up to ten feet waterward of the coastal jurisdiction line and construction of a seawall from coastal site plan reviews and to exempt the same from permitting by DEEP.

The bill would also require that any materials like sand or gravel that was excavated waterward of the mean high water mark be first offered to municipalities or certain special taxing districts for beach restoration before disposal. These issues are minor enough that allowing local municipalities to make those decisions instead of the extended state process, little difference to the environment should be noticed.

Probably the most difficult time for waterfront property owners in the past 24 months were those months following the two major tropical storms that impacted Connecticut in 2011 and 2012. At both times infrastructure along the shore took a beating, many properties suffered severe damage but many more had moderate impacts, all needing repairs. They all were required to obtain some permit or approval prior to making any restorations or repairs and the permit process with DEEP was considered notoriously slow. A change to municipal permitting would probably be much swifter.

We ask you again to support **Committee Bill No. 459 AN ACT CONCERNING LOCAL CONTROL OVER COASTAL AREAS**. It's an initiative that would shift some minor responsibilities from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to the local regulatory bodies in the interests of speed and simplification. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these issues and please know that we are available to discuss them at any time.

Sincerely,

John S. Johnson
Legislative Chair

Grant W. Westerson
President

Linda A. Kowalski
The Kowalski Group